

NOAA Records Disposition Handbook
Chapter 1200: Scientific and Technical Records
Rev. 5/95

1200-01	Project Case files	NCI-370-75-1, Items 19-10a, 10b, 10c
1200-02	Research Notebooks	NCI-370-75-3, Item 19-10b and 19-IIa
1200-03	Laboratory Logbooks.	NCI-370-75-1. Item 19-7
1200-04	Equipment Drawings	New Item
1200-05	Project Proposal records	New Item
1200-06	Data Request records	New Item

Chapter 1200: Scientific and Technical Records

The records listed below document NOAA scientific, technological, or engineering research, testing, and investigation regardless of media or physical format, i.e. textual, electronic, photographic, microform, audiovisual, or other media or format. The records may be created and maintained by all NOAA operating unit laboratories, data centers, or laboratory groups, project teams, or individual staff researchers. Research projects included in this schedule may be funded directly through NOAA appropriations, by other government agencies, by contracts with private-sector businesses or other organizations, in conjunction with various research institutes or consortia, or in collaboration with other NOAA offices or laboratories. Scientific program records may also be listed in either Chapters 100, Records Common to All Offices, such as program and correspondence subject files. Other records may be scheduled in Chapter 200, or in other specific functional chapters of this Manual. If program records are not listed in either Chapters 100 or 200, or in other specific functional chapters of this Handbook, contact the NOAA Records Management Officer for storage and disposition instructions.

1200

-01 Project Case Files

Records containing information regardless of the physical media or format that are created by NOAA staff, project groups, sections, or technical divisions related to specific research projects, tests, or assignments that may be sponsored or funded by NOAA, other government agencies, private-sector businesses or other collaborators, scientific research consortia, or NOAA interagency collaboration.

Research notebooks created by the principal investigator or an investigating group or project team in the course of completing a specific research project are related to these project case files, and are separately scheduled in Item 2.

A project case file should provide a reasonable record of a project which would allow another person to reconstruct and/or verify the procedures and analyses. A typical file contains, but is not limited to, incoming and outgoing correspondence, memoranda, e-mail printouts, copies of contracts or other requests for service, technical papers, engineering plans and drawings, preliminary and final reports, photographs and negatives related to the project, references or indexes to related electronic records and data, test schedules, periodic progress reports, notes and working papers, specifications, draft and final approved standards, preliminary and final research data, statistical analyses, tables, charts, graphs, computer printouts or analyses of scientific or engineering data, reprints of the final project report, study, or journal article, and other records accumulated in NOAA laboratories or technical divisions documenting the progress and completion of agency research projects. Related records may include computer disks, tapes, and other electronic media and information.

NOTE: Prior to closing project case files and transferring them to the Federal Records Center or to the NOAA Records Holding Area, project case files and the corresponding research notebooks should be reviewed by the appropriate division chief to determine if the records meet any or all of the permanent records selection criteria described below. Project case files (and the related research notebooks) meeting one or more of the criteria listed will be selected for permanent retention, clearly identified as permanently valuable records, and maintained separately from nonselected case files (and research notebooks) while in the custody of the agency. All selected project case files and research notebooks must be retired separately from nonselected records to the Federal Records Center, and a statement certifying that the agency has reviewed the records as set forth below must accompany the SF 135.

Selection criteria:

Case files (and related research notebooks) that are particularly significant for documenting NOAA research projects that:

1. received national or international awards of distinction, i.e. the Nobel Prize;
2. were the work of prominent NOAA investigators of widely recognized professional stature, or who have received national or international recognition outside their professional discipline;
3. resulted in a significant improvement in public health, safety, or other vital public interest;
4. made a significant contribution to new national or international environmental policies, or had a significant impact on the development of new national or international scientific, political, economic, or social priorities.
5. were the subject of widespread national or international media attention;
6. resulted in significant social, political, or scientific controversy;
7. were the subject of extensive Congressional, Department of Commerce, or other government agency scrutiny or investigation; or
8. established a precedent for significantly changing NOAA research or administrative policies.

AUTHORIZED DISPOSITION:

- a. **Selected project case files**

PERMANENT. Break closed files annually and transfer to the Federal Records Center. Transfer to the National Archives when 30 years old.

b. Nonselected project case files

Break closed files annually and remove duplicate copies and unnecessary nonrecord materials. Transfer to the Federal Records Center. Destroy when 30 years old.

1200

-02 Research notebooks

Research notebooks are maintained by individual scientists, engineers, or project teams and document the progress of research and experimentation. The records include, but are not limited to, notes of the investigator's observations and research progress, scientific methodology, preliminary conclusions, indices and other references to relevant electronic files, sketches and drawings, formulas or equations, statistical analyses, preliminary or final results of tests, experiments, research, investigations or other technological and scientific development activities.

NOTE: Prior to closing research notebooks and transferring them to the Federal Records Center or to the NOAA Records Storage Facility for temporary storage, all research notebooks and their related project case files should be reviewed by the appropriate division chief to determine if the records meet any or all of the permanent records selection criteria described in Item 1. Research notebooks (and the related project case files) meeting one or more of the criteria listed will be selected for permanent retention, clearly identified as permanently valuable records, and maintained separately from nonselected research notebooks (and project case files) while in the custody of the agency. All selected project case files and research notebooks must be retired separately from nonselected records to the Federal Records Center, and a statement certifying that the agency has reviewed the records according to the criteria set forth below must accompany the SF 135.

AUTHORIZED DISPOSITION:

a. Selected research notebooks

PERMANENT. Transfer directly to the National Archives with the selected project case files (Item 1) when 30 years old. **NOTE:** Closed research notebooks may be transferred to the Federal Records Center for storage with the selected project case files, and then transferred to the National Archives with the project case files when 30 years old.

b. Nonselected research notebooks

Destroy when 30 years old or when no longer needed for current agency business, whichever is later.

1200

-03 Machine, Instrument, and Laboratory Log Books and Registers

Log books documenting the operation or use of scientific equipment and instrumentation, or the use of laboratory facilities by NOAA employees or contractors.

AUTHORIZED DISPOSITION: Destroy when no longer needed for current agency business.

1200

-04 Equipment, Machine, and Instrumentation Design Drawings, and Related Records

Drawings, plans, specifications, instruction manuals, system design records, development and construction requirements and specifications, “as built” drawings, and other related records describing the design, fabrication, use, improvement, and modification of laboratory instrumentation, equipment, machinery, and scientific apparatus.

AUTHORIZED DISPOSITION: Destroy when the related instrumentation, machinery, or equipment is destroyed, or donate design drawings to the NOAA History Center, NOAA museum, or other federal agency or institution with the instrumentation, machinery, or equipment in accordance with 36 CFR 1228.60.

1200

-05 Project Proposal and Planning Records

Proposals and plans for scientific and technical projects, research and development activities, and other investigations that are submitted to internal NOAA units or external funding agencies for technical review, feasibility, revision, or other consideration. These records may include but are not limited to the project proposal, objectives and goals to achieve plans, work statements, justifications and priority statements, budget and resource plans or projections, technical reports, peer reviews, feasibility studies, and similar records that relate to the proposed project.

AUTHORIZED DISPOSITION:

a. Funded Proposals and Plans

Transfer to a Project Case File, listed in Item 1.

b. Nonfunded Proposals and Plans

Destroy when 5 years old.

1200

-06 Data Request Records

Requests from the public, other government agencies, or private organizations and businesses for copies of NOAA scientific data, certifications, technical reports, and other scientific or technical information.

AUTHORIZED DISPOSITION: Destroy when no longer needed for current agency business, or when 3 years old, whichever is sooner.